

REMARKS

Applicant requests favorable reconsideration in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks. Claims 2-15 were pending in the application and were rejected in the Office Action. Claims 2, 5, 7-9, and 11 are amended as set forth above. No claims are cancelled. Thus, claims 2-15 remain pending and are submitted for further consideration.

Claims 2-6 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,577,765 ("Takeda") and claims 7-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Takeda in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,439,606 ("Okada"). Both of these rejections should be withdrawn because neither Takeda nor Okada (alone or in combination) disclose, teach or suggest the claimed invention.

As amended herein, independent claim 2 recites that "the rear panel is directly connected to both the front upper panel and the front lower panel." Similarly, as amended, independent claims 8 and 11 recite that the "rear panel, which comprises a gas inlet, is directly connected to both of the front panels." In contrast to these limitations, although Takeda teaches a rear panel 20A that includes a gas inlet, the rear panel 20A is not "directly connected" to the front panels 10A, 10B. *See* Takeda at Fig. 4. Similarly, although Okada (in Fig. 9) teaches a rear panel 116 that includes a gas inlet and that is directly connected to a front panel 117, the front panel 117 is not formed of two panels, *i.e.*, the rear panel 116 is not "directly connected" to two front panels. Moreover, one of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to replace Takeda's rear panel 20A and front panel 20B (which separates the rear panel 20A from the front panels 10A, 10B) with Okada's singular rear panel 116 because Takeda's front panel 20B is intended to contact the passenger (*see* Takeda at Fig. 7) whereas Okada's rear panel 116 is not intended to contact the passenger. Thus, the rejections should be withdrawn.

In light of the foregoing, as Takeda and Okada (standing alone or combined) fail to disclose, teach, or suggest the invention recited in independent claims 2, 8, and 11, the references can not be used to reject these claims, or any claim dependent thereon, under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b), 103(a). Each of claims 3-7, 9, 10 and 12-15 depend from one of claims 2, 8 or 11. Thus, each of these dependent claims is also allowable over Takeda and Okada, for at least the reasons set forth above, without regard to the other patentable limitations recited therein.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 2-15 is respectfully requested.

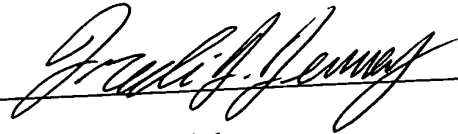
CONCLUSION

For the aforementioned reasons, claims 2-15 are now in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned if such communication would expedite the prosecution of the application.

Respectfully submitted,

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